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ABSTRACT

To determine the state of the art in reading instruction for secondary level learning disabled (LD) students, a survey of 138 secondary LD teachers was conducted. Questionnaires were designed to obtain information on five practices and procedures: (1) the role responsibility for teaching reading, (2) reading assessment instruments, (3) commonly used reading approaches, (4) reading skills stressed, and (5) commonly used reading materials. Among findings were the following: larger schools, with enrollments in excess of 2,000 students, do not always include reading instruction as a major responsibility of the LD program; the most commonly used tests were diagnostic reading batteries including the Wide Range Achievement Test, the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, and the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (Reading Subtests); the individual reading approach was the preferred teaching method; comprehension appeared to be a skill most stressed at the secondary level; and materials used included basal reading series, series books, and reading kits. Tables with statistical data are appended. (SB)

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Secondary LD

Reading Practices and Procedures

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Secondary LD
Reading Practices and Procedures

With the passage of Public Law 94-142 (PL 94-142) most states have mandated similar legislation which has spurred the rapid development of special education programs. In Arizona, school districts followed the typical development pattern of initiating elementary programs and then gradually expanding the same practices and procedures at the secondary level (D'Alonzo and Wiseman, 1978). Separate credentials for elementary and secondary special education are not issued; rather a K-12 credential is issued which allows flexibility for smaller rural districts. A limited number of relatively new courses for secondary special education are offered at the universities and colleges. For the most part, however, currently employed secondary special education teachers graduated from programs with a dual major in special education and elementary education. This training emphasis readily explains the implementation of elementary practices and procedures at the secondary level noted by D'Alonzo and Wiseman (1978). This pattern of development may be typical in other states also.

Reading instruction has always been a major emphasis area of a learning disability (LD) program. As such it was expected that LD teachers would provide the primary instruction in it. Initially, flagrant misuse of elementary level materials occurred due to the paucity of appropriate materials; and teachers complained that students were not interested or motivated. Teachers

requested, and still solicit, lists of appropriate reading materials and guidelines regarding reading approaches and skills to be stressed at the secondary level.

During the past five years an increased emphasis on secondary LD has been underway; university coursework has been available as well as inservice programs through the Arizona Department of Education Division of Special Education. As a result of this plus several years of teaching experience, LD teachers indicate that they have changed their programs so that they no longer use elementary level reading practices and procedures. If this is true, their experience and accrued knowledge may be of assistance to LD teachers who desire additional information regarding reading approaches, skills and materials for a secondary students.

In a effort to determine the "State of the Art" a survey of secondary LD teachers was conducted. The survey sampled five practices and procedures including (1) the role responsibility for teaching reading, (2) reading assessment instruments, (3) commonly used reading approaches, (4) reading skills stressed and (5) commonly used reading materials.

Method

A questionnaire assessing reading practices and procedures was developed and field tested through personal interviews with 16 secondary LD teachers from throughout Arizona. A

stratified random selection process, utilizing the Arizona Educational Directory (1979), served as the basis for identification of subjects. Their responses indicated a clear understanding of the questions so no item modifications were made.

Upon confirmation of the questionnaire clarity, questionnaires were mailed to all remaining public high schools not previously interviewed. Special alternative and Bureau of Indian Affairs (B.I.A.) high schools were excluded from this study. In total 106 high schools were contacted. Each school was requested to return responses from two secondary LD teachers, if employed by the district. The mailings occurred during January and February 1980.

Results

Ninety-six high schools out of the total of 122 participated in this study for a return of 81 percent. A total of 138 questionnaires were completed by secondary LD teachers from a representative state sample.

Role Responsibility for Teaching Reading. Demographic data regarding school location and size were collected and analyzed to determine differences. School location, that is metropolitan Phoenix or Tucson compared with the isolated rural districts, did not affect reading practices and procedures whereas school size was a variable that affected reading practices. Demograph data regarding school size of the sample

are presented in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here

When comparing high schools having student enrollments of 500 or under with high schools having student enrollments of 2000 or over, a significant difference did arise regarding their responsibilities for teaching reading. The responsibility for reading instruction varies with school size. Larger schools, with enrollments in excess of 2000 pupils, do not always include reading instruction as a major responsibility of the LD program. Table 2 illustrates the chi-square analysis that resulted in a x^2 of 5.4854 which is significant at the .05 level.

Insert Table 2 about here

Reading Assessment Instruments. The assessment instruments were grouped into three categories: (1) general survey tests, (2) diagnostic reading batteries and (3) diagnostic reading tests of specific skills. None of the general survey tests or diagnostic tests of specific skills proved to be overwhelmingly popular. The most commonly used tests were diagnostic reading batteries including the Wide Range Achievement Test, the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test and the Peabody

Individual Achievement Test: Reading Subtests. Refer to Table 3 for a summary of the various tests and responses.

Insert Table 3 about here

Reading Approaches. Teachers indicated their choices for various reading approaches by prioritizing their answers, with one being their top choice, two their second choice, and so on. Methods that were not given a priority number were assigned an extrapolated ranking of nine. Means were derived for all approaches and rankings assigned. Refer to Table 4 for a summary of the rankings.

Insert Table 4 about here

The Individual Reading Approach obtained a Mean ($\bar{x}$) of 2.96 which placed it as the preferred reading approach. The second ranked approach, Multi-Sensory, had a $\bar{x}$ of 5.54, with the Linguistics approach not far behind with a $\bar{x}$ of 5.91. The reading approaches with $\bar{x}$ scores of 8 or more reflect limited use; their scores are artificially inflated due to the data policy of assigning extrapolated rankings of nine to each when no respondent choice was specified.

Skills Stressed. The question of reading skills stressed

in the LD program was addressed through a rank order procedure with "one" being the skill that received most instructional emphasis. The results are summarized in Table 5. Again, the skills are prioritized on the basis of low $\bar{x}$ numbers indicating instructional emphasis. Comprehension ($\bar{x}$ = 2.67) appears to be a skill most stressed at the secondary level. Other skills stressed in rank order include survival skills ($\bar{x}$ = 2.94), word recognition ($\bar{x}$ = 3.58), word meanings ($\bar{x}$ = 4.01), concept development ($\bar{x}$ = 4.94), listening skills ($\bar{x}$ = 5.09) and study skills ($\bar{x}$ = 5.43).

Insert Table 5 about here

Reading materials. Teachers were asked to identify the reading materials they used with high school L.D. students. Nine categories of materials were requested: (1) basal reading series; (2) series books; (3) reading kits; (4) reading workbooks; (5) reading games; (6) audio-visual products and aids; (7) reading machines; (8) magazines and newspapers and (9) reference materials. For convenience numerous programs were listed and additional space was provided for other responses. Tables 6-14 present in rank-order of frequency response the materials in each category. Only products that received more than five responses were listed.

Insert Tables 6-14 about here

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that reading instruction is not a major responsibility in all LD program, particularly large high schools having enrollments in excess of 2000 students. Larger districts tend to employ reading specialists who concentrate on all reading problems. This, in effect, reduces the teaching responsibility of the LD teacher in reading and allows other areas and skills to be stressed. Teachers desiring to teach LD at the secondary level, who do not have strong coursework in reading, may want to complete additional coursework if their responsibilities include primary reading instruction.

The data collected reflects the "State of the Art" in Arizona. In addition to the teaching responsibility discussed above, the data reveal currently used reading assessment instruments, approaches, skills and materials. The data on assessment instruments indicate dissatisfaction with existing devices. If this reflects a national concensus, a crucial need exists in this area and research efforts should be directed toward it. The majority of the data can be used for reference purposes; it reflects accrued knowledge

which may be beneficial to LD teachers desiring additional information regarding reading approaches, skills and materials for secondary students. It should be noted that the skills and materials reflect an orientation that is not typical of an elementary school orientation.

References

Arizona Department of Education. 1979-80 Arizona Educational Directory. Phoenix, Arizona: Fall, 1979.

D'Alonzo, B. J. and Wiseman, D. E. "Actual and Desired Roles of the High School Learning Disability Resource Teacher." Journal of Learning Disabilities. Chicago: Educational Press, 1978, Volume II, 390-397.

Footnote

This article is based on a doctoral dissertation, "A Study to Identify and Describe Reading Instruction Used in Arizona Public High Schools for the Learning Disabled Student, submitted by Bruce A. Ostertag in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree at Northern Arizona University

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Table 1

School Size of Sample

Student Enrollment	Percent of Responses
500 or less	21
500 - 999	18.8
1000 - 1499	14.5
1500 - 1999	15.3
2000 or more	30.4

Table 2

Chi-square Analysis of Role Responsibility for Reading Instruction

Major Responsibility	Frequencies of Respondents Indicating School Enrollment Under 500	Frequencies of Respondents Indicating School Enrollment Over 2000
Yes	25	24
No	4	18
	29	42

($x^2 = 5.4854^a$, Significance level = $.0192^b$)

[a]Chi-square test used: Test of Independent Samples

[b]$p < .05$

Table 3

Use of Reading Assessment Instruments

Reading Tests	Frequency of Respondents
General Survey Tests:	
Gates-McGinitie Reading Test	22
Metropolitan Achievement	2
McGrath Test of Reading Skills	0
Nelson Silent Reading Test	16
SRA Achievement: Reading	11
Other	22
Diagnostic Reading Batteries:	
Durrell Analysis of Difficulties	4
Gates-McKillop Diagnostic Test	5
Gilmore Oral Reading Test	9
Peabody Individual Achievement Test (PIAT): Reading	57
Slosson Oral Reading Test	20

Table 3 - continued

Reading Tests	Frequency of Respondents
Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales	16
Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT):	
Reading	74
Woodcock Reading Mastery Test	72
Other	12
Diagnostic Reading Tests of Specific Skills:	
Botel Reading Inventory	6
Doren Diagnostic Test of Word Recognition	3
Gray Oral Reading Test	17
Other	6
Total	374

A total of 117 special educators responded with 21 abstaining. Most of the respondents gave multiple replies.

Table 4

Rank-order and Mean Scores of Reading Approaches

Rank-Order of Reading Approaches[a]	Mean
1. Individual Reading	2.06
2. Multi-Sensory	5.54
3. Linguistics	5.91
4. Programmed Instruction	6.12
5. Phonics	6.33
6. Language Experience	6.54
7. Basals	8.13
8. Sight Words	8.28

[a]Reading approaches listed in rank-order of priority response.

Table 5

Rank-order and Mean Scores of Reading Skills

Reading-Related Skill[a]	Mean
1. Comprehension	2.67
2. Survival Reading Skills	2.94
3. Word Recognition	3.58
4. Word Meaning	4.01
5. Concept Development	4.94
6. Listening Skills	5.09
7. Study Skills	5.43
8. Reading Rate	7.32

[a]Reading-related skills listed in rank-order of priority response.

Table 6

Basal Reading Series Used in Arizona
High School Learning Disability Programs[a]

Product Name	Publishing Company
Corrective Reading Series	Science Research Associates
Sullivan Programmed Reading for Adults	Webster, McGraw-Hill
Merrill Linguistic Program	Charles Merrill Publishing Company
Reading for Concepts	Webster, McGraw-Hill
RD 2000	Reader's Digest
Scope English/Reading Program	Scholastic
New Practice Readers	Webster, McGraw-Hill

[a]Basal series listed in order of response frequency. All indicated series received five or more responses.

Table 7

Series Books Used in Arizona

High School Learning Disability Programs[a]

Product Name	Publishing Company
Action Series	Scholastic
PAL Paperbook Series	Xerox
Double Action Series	Scholastic
New Age Illustrated Read-Along Program	Pendulum Press
Guidebook to Better Reading	Economy
Sprint Series	Scholastic
Pacemaker Bestsellers	Fearon-Pitman
Real Stories	Globe
Skill Builders	Reader's Digest
Reading Skills Program	Scholastic
Morgan Bay Mysteries	Addison-Wesley
Pacesetters	Children's Press
Breakthrough	Allyn and Bacon

[a]Series Books listed in order of response frequency. All indicated series received five or more responses.

Table 8

Reading Kits Used in Arizona

High School Learning Disability Programs[a].

Product Name	Publishing Company
Reading Laboratories	Science Research Associates
Reading for Understanding	Science Research Associates
Grolier Reading Attainment System	Education Design, Inc.
Clues	Education Progress Corp.
BFA Comprehension Skills Lab	American Learning Corp.
Scope Activity Kits	Scholastic
Reading Booster Kit	Webster, McGraw-Hill
Dimensions in Reading	Science Research Associates
News Labs I and II	Science Research Associates
Reading for Comprehension	Educational Insights

Table 8 - continued

Product Name	Publishing Company
IRS Reading Laboratory	Houghton-Mifflin
NFL Action Kit	Bowmar
Adventures in Science Fiction	Educational Insights
Adventures in Mystery	Educational Insights
BFA Reading Vocabulary Lab	American Learning Corp.
BFA Reading in the Real World	American Learning Corp.

[a]Reading Kits listed in order of response frequency. All indicated kits received five or more responses.

Table 9

Reading Workbooks Used in Arizona

High School Learning Disability Programs[a,b]

Product Name	Publishing Company
Boning Specific Skills Series	Barnell-Loft
Mott Basic Language Program	Modern Curriculum Press
Real Life Reading Skills	Scholastic
Boning Multiple Skill Series	Barnell-Loft
Go--Reading in the Content Areas	Scholastic
Troubleshooter	Houghton-Mifflin
Reading Skills Series	Hammond
Basic Reading Skills	Scott-Foresman
Reading, Spelling, Vocabulary, and Pronunciation	Amsco School Pub. Co.
Impact	Benefit Press
Reading Comprehension	Amsco School Pub. Co.
Spectrum of Skills	Macmillan Pub. Co.
Ginn Word Enrichment Program	Xeroz

[a]Workbooks listed in order of response frequency. All

Table 9 - continued

indicated materials received five or more responses.

[b]Previously mentioned basal series, reading series, or reading kits that have supplementary workbooks are not included in this table.

Table 10

Reading Games Used in Arizona

High School Learning Disability Programs[a,b,c].

Product Name	Publishing Company
Scrabble	S & R Games
Password	Milton Bradley
Probe	Parker Brothers
Comprehension Games Kit	Educational Insights
Spill and Spell	Parker Brothers
Ungame	Parker Brothers
Boggle	Parker Brothers

[a]Reading Games listed in order of response frequency. All indicated games received five or more responses.

[b]Several games listed are not specifically designed reading games, but reading is an integral component of said games.

[c]Thirty-six special educators indicated that they made their own non-commercial reading games.

Table 11

Audio-Visual Products Used in Arizona High School Learning Disability Programs[a,b]

Product Name	Publishing Company
EDL Controlled Reader Tapes	Webster, McGraw-Hill
New Age Illustrated Read-Along Program[c]	Pendulum Press
Individualized Cassette Learning Packets	Media Materials, Inc.
Language Master Reading Program	Bell & Howell
Clues[d]	Educational Progress Corp.
National Series Filmstrips	Reader's Digest
Jabberwocky	AVC Corporation

[a]Audio-visual products listed in order of response frequency. All indicated series received five or more responses.

[b]Thirty-eight teachers indicated that they made their own audio-visual materials.

[c]Previously on the list of Series Books.

[d]Previously on the list of Reading Kits.

Table 12

Reading Machines/Supplementary Reading-Related Equipment Used in Arizona High School Learning Disability Programs[a,b,c]

Product Name	Publishing Company
Tachistoscope	EDL/Webster, McGraw-Hill
Controlled Reader	EDL/Webster, McGraw-Hill
Language Master	Bell & Howell
AutoVance II	Singer Educational Division
Tutorette	Audio-Tronics
VuMatic	Instructional Communications Corp.
System 80	Borg Warner

[a]Machines listed in order of response frequency. All indicated materials received five or more responses.

[b]Forty-nine teachers indicated the usage of various cassette recorders in their programs.

[c]More than five teachers indicated the additional use of varying listening centers, projectors, and record players for their programs.

Table 13

Magazines and Newspapers Used in Arizona

High School Learning Disability Programs[a,b].

Newspaper and Magazine Names	Magazine Publishing Companies
Scope	Scholastic
You and Your World	Xerox
Action	Scholastic
Newsweek	Newsweek Publishing Company
Time	Time/Life Publishers
National Geographic	National Geographic Society
Weekly Reader's	Xerox
Sprint Magazine	Scholastic
Science World	Scholastic
Reader's Digest	Reader's Digest Publications
Voice	Scholastic
World	National Geographic Society
Senior Scholastic	Scholastic

[a]Magazines and Newspapers listed in order of response

Table 13 - continued

frequency. All indicated materials received five or more responses.

[b]Three newspapers published in Arizona were deleted.

Table 14

Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, and Thesaurus' Used in Arizona High School Learning Disability Programs[a].

Product Name	Publishing Company
Webster's New School Dictionary	American Book Company
Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary	American Book Company
World Book Encyclopedia	World Book/Childcraft
Thorndike-Barnhart Dictionary	Scott Foresman Company
Roget's Thesaurus	Pocket Books, Inc.
Webster's World Dictionary	American Book Company
American Heritage School Dictionary	Houghton-Mifflin

[a]Items listed in order of response frequency. All indicated material received five or more responses.